

A
TREATISE
OF
Laying on of Hands,
With the
HISTORY
THEREOF,

Both from the Scripture and Antiquity.

Wherein an Account is given how it hath
been practised in all Ages since *Christ*,
the mistakes about it rectified and the
sence of *Heb. 6. 2.* cleared.

By H. D'ANVERS.

*Isa. 57. 14. Take up the stumbling-block out of the
way of my People.*

L O N D O N,

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A
TREATISE
OF
Laying on of Hands
With the
HISTORY

OF THE
Baptism in Water, and Anointing
With Oil, as given in the
New Testament, and the
reasons thereof, as they are
set forth in the Scriptures, and
the manner of it, as it is
practised in the Church of
Christ, &c. &c. &c.



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A
T R E A T I S E
O F
Laying on of Hands.

HAVING given you an *Account* both *The Intro-*
 from *Scripture* and *Antiquity* of *duction.*
 the business of *Baptism* in its *In-*
stitution, Subject, Manner, End,
 &c. It may neither be *unnecessary* nor *unprofitable* to give you here some *Account* of that of
Laying on of Hands, not only because it im-
 mediately follows that of *Baptisms*, *Heb. 6. 1, 2.*
 but more especially, because for *Confirmation*, as
 it hath been called, it hath been next after
Baptism, so solemnly *asserted, practised, and*
enjoined both in *former* and *latter* times, as an
Ordinance of *Christ* and *Essentially* necessary
 to *Church-Communion*. But what this laying
 on of *Hands* is, and how that of *Confirmati-*
on is founded upon the *Word of God*, we shall
 here *consider* and *examine*, and *recommend* to
 the judgment of all discerning and impartial
Christians.

The Method observed.

The Method I shall observe herein, shall be, first to give you an Account what we find of this Rite in the *New Testament*. Secondly, How asserted and Practised by the *Ancients*, with the *Opinions* of the *Fathers* and *Decrees* of *Councils* upon it. Thirdly, How Practised and enjoyed by the *Church of Rome*. Fourthly, How by the *Church of England*. Fifthly, How asserted by some of the *Presbyterians* and *Independent* perswasion. Sixthly, And how practised and enjoyed by several of the *Baptised Churches* in this Nation, with some remarks upon each of them for the better discovery of Truth.

1. How used in the *New Testament*.

1. Benediction.

Miraculous healings.

1. How laying on of Hands is used in the *New Testament*.

First, in Benediction, *Mark* 10. 16. He took the young Children up in his Arms, put his Hands upon them, and blessed them.

Secondly, In the Cure of Diseases and healing the sick *Mark* 6. 5. And he could there do no mighty work, save that he laid his Hands upon a few sick folks and healed them: And c. 16. 17, 18. In my Name they shall cast out Devils they shall speak with New Tongues, they shall take up Serpents, and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; They shall lay Hands on the sick and they shall recover, *Acts* 28. 8. And it came to pass, that the Father of Publius lay sick of a Fever and of a Bloody Flux, to whom Paul entred in and prayed, and laid his Hands on him and healed him.

3. For extraordinary Gifts
1. Before Baptism.

Thirdly, For the confirming the extraordinary Gifts of the Spirit. viz.

1. Before Baptism, *Act*. 9. 17. And Ananias

was went his way and entred into the House, and putting his Hands on him said, brother Saul, the Lord even Jesus that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me that thou might'st receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost, and immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been Scales, and he received sight forthwith and arose and was Baptised.

2. After Baptism, Acts 8. 14, 15, &c. ^{2. After Baptism.} Now when the Apostles which were at Jerusalem, heard that Samaria had received the Word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John, who when they were come down, prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Ghost, for as yet he was fallen upon none of them, only they were Baptised in the Name of the Lord Jesus. Then laid they their Hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost. And when Simon saw that through laying on of the Apostles Hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money, saying, give me also this Power that on whomsoever I lay Hands they may receive the Holy Ghost, but Peter said, thy Money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money, &c.

Fourthly, In Ordination or setting apart ^{4. Ordination.} to Office, viz. Acts 6. 6. whom they set before the Apostles (viz. the seven Deacons the Church had chosen) and when they had prayed and laid their hands on them, and the Word of God increased, &c. ^{1. Deacons}

1. Tim. 4. 14. Neglect not the Gift which is in thee that was given thee by Prophecy with the laying on of Hands of the Presbytery. ^{2. Elders.} 2. Tim. 1. 6. Wherefore I put thee in remembrance

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that thou stir up the gift of God which is in thee, by the putting on of my hands. 1 Tim. 5. 22. Lay hands suddenly on no Man, neither be partaker of other mens sins, keep thy self pure.

3 Messengers.

Acts 13. 3. And when they (viz. the Elders or Teachers of Antioch) had Fasted and Prayed, and laid their hands on them [viz. Paul and Barnabas] they sent them away.

In which Scriptures speaking of this Rite, we may take notice of these things.

1. First, the several kinds of it, viz. For Benediction, Healing, Ordination, and giving of the Spirit.

2. Secondly, what called, viz. Laying on of Hands.

3. Thirdly, the Subjects, viz. Little Children, Sick Persons, and such upon whom the Spirit had not fallen, and Church-Officers.

4. Fourthly, the Administrators, viz. Christ Jesus himself, any gifted Believer, the Elders, or Presbyters, The gifted Apostles.

5. Fifthly, the end, to Bless little Children, to give Miraculous healing. And for Extraordinary gifts of the Spirit to confirm the Gospel. And for Ordination of Church-Officers.

2 How by the Ancients.

Secondly, How asserted by the Ancients, and by the Canons and Decrees of several Councils.

Dionysius.

Dionysius the Areopagite Pauls Convert at Athens supposed to be the first Writer about the year 70. in his Ecclesiastical Hierarchy cap. de Bapt. saith, After Baptism let the Sacrament of Confirmation be adjoined with Unction, then

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then let the Eucharist be given, Contemp. 3.
Serm. 8.

Pope Clement in his fourth Epistle, saith, *P. Clement*
Let them be Baptized, and then Consigned by the
Bishop for the Holy Spirit, for without Confir-
mation no perfection. Joseph, *Vice comes De Bapt.*
Ritibus p. 369. c. 18.

Justin Martyr's Responses 137, Quest. saith, *Justin*
after Baptism we are to anoint with Holy Chrism Martyr.
for Spiritual benefit, *Vice com.* ch. 28. p. 369.

Pope Hyginus in his Decree, as saith Gratian *P. Hygi-*
L. Osiand. *Cens.* 2. l. 2. c. 5. saith, in Cate-
chism, Baptism, and Confirmation, let there be a
Gossp if necessity require.

Pope Calixtus, Anno. 218. Ordained Con- *P. Calixtus*
firmation to be performed with Chrism, Flores
Temporum *confes. Fabo.* c. 7.

Pope Urban in, his decretal Epistle enjoins, *P. Urban.*
that the Sacrament of Confirmation be immedi-
ately given after Baptism, and that all the faith-
ful are to wait for the Spirit by the imposition of
the Hands of the Bishop, *Vice co.* c. 38. p. 370.

Pope Melchhiades, or Meliades about 310. *P. Melchi-*
ordained Imposition of hands as necessary to *ades.*
perfect Baptism. And in his Universal De-
cretal Epistle, answering the Question, which
of the Sacraments Baptism or Confirmation was
of greater Efficacy and Vertue, saith, they are to
be joined together, there being such Affinity be-
twixt them, that one is not to be done without
the other; neither of them being perfect alone,
Vice comes p.

Pope Eusebius in his Decretal Epistle calls *P. Eusebi-*
Imposition of hands a Sacrament which was not *us.*
Lawful to be administred but by the Bishop. *Magd.*

Cent. 4. p. 478. Also in his Epistle to the Bishop of Tusca, prefers laying on of hands or Confirmation before Baptism, Mag. Cen. 4. c. 7. p. 581.

Cyprian.

Cyprian in his 73 Epistle to Jubajan saith, that Baptism is consummated by the Sacrament of Confirmation. And again in Ep. 72. lev. 1. Persons are fully sanctified, and may be sons of God if they be born of both Sacraments, viz. Baptism and Confirmation, Vict. com. p. 370.

Ambrose.

Ambrose after the Font or Baptism, let there be perfection or Confirmation, for so he calls imposition of hands, Lib. 2. c. 7.

Jerom.

Jerom advers. Lucif. Contending for the Rites of the Church, saith, And do not you know that it is the Custom of the Church, that upon the Baptised, hands should be imposed, Mag. Cen. 4. p. 420.

Augustin.

Augustin; That Imposition of Hands after Baptism, was necessary for the gifts of the Spirit. And that if Ignorant Infants be brought to be Baptised, let them Answer for them that brought them, and being Baptised let them be Confirmed and Anointed with holy Chrisme, and so let them receive the Eucharist, Lib. de Ecclesi. Dogm. Vice comes, c. 28. p. 371.

P. Innocent.

Pope Innocent in his first Ep. 22. Macedon. c. 5, Shews how impious and Sacrilegious it is to repeat the Baptism of Infants or Adult, and how requisite to lay hands on the Baptised after the Example of Peter and John, Acts 8. 17. and Paul 19. 6. Vice comes c. 3. p. 376.

Isidore.

Isidore saith, that Imposition of hands did belong not to the Bishops Vicars, but to the Bishops

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shops themselves. And the Reason he renders is, because that none of the 70 Disciples who Represented the Apostles, had power by laying on of hands to give the Spirit, Magdeburg. Cent. 6. p. 675.

Haimo upon Hebrews 6. saith, Imposition ^{Hfimo.} of hands is called Confirmation, which by the Spirit is received, and after Baptism confirms the Unity of the Church, and that Children as well as Adults were to partake thereof, Mag. Cen. 9.

Rabanus Maurus Lib. 1. Inst. Cler. c. 30. saith, ^{Rabanus.} that there are two laying on of hands, one by the Priest in Baptism, the other by the Bishop in Confirmation, as Christ gave the Spirit by blowing upon them before the Resurrection and after upon the day of Pentecost.

Canons and Decrees of Councils.

In the Council of Laodicea in Phrygia Pa- ^{C. Laod.} catiana, held under P. Sylvester the first of that Name, Bishop of Rome about 315. It was decreed in the 48 Canon, that the Baptised ought to receive after Baptism the most sacred Chrysm, and be made partakers of the Heavenly Kingdom. Vice com. p. 371.

In the Council of Eliberis in Spain, held ^{C. Elibe.} 305. unde Pope Marcellus. It was decreed in the 38 Canon. That such as fyled into strange ^{Con. 1115}

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Countries, or if a Church be not near at hand, a Believer if he hath Baptism intire viz. Baptism and Confirmation, and have not two Wives, may Baptise a Catechumen in case of necessity through sickness, but so that if he Recover, he bring him to the Bishop that he may be perfected by Imposition of Hands, and Canon 77. If any Deacon shall without a Presbyter Baptise, the Bishop ought by blessing to perfect or Confirm them.

C. Carth.

In the 4 Council of Carthage under P. Innocent the first, about 418. It was decreed that there should be Imposition of hands for the Absolving the Penitent, Vicker. L. 2. de persecut.

C. Spalen. Vandal.

The Council of Spalencia, ordained that the Baptised were to have hands laid upon them and to be signed with Chrism, and that the Bishops only were to perform it. Magdeb. Cen. 7. p. 148.

C. Bracerens.

The Council of Bracerens c. 7. Commanded that a little Balsom should be put into the Consecrated Oyl, and that no less Reverence should be paid to this Ceremony, than to Baptism itself. Mag. Cen. 7. p. 148.

C. Constan

The Council of Constantinople chap. 7. That none were to be admitted to Confirmation but those that were instructed by Catechism, and cou'd say the Creed and Lords Prayer by heart. Mag. Cen. 7. p. 148.

C. Cabril.

The Council of Cabillonensis Cap. 6. In the time of Pope Eugenius, Decreed that the Baptism of the Adult should presently, if Infants after some years of understanding, be confirmed with

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with Consignation and Chrysm and that Confirmation should not be reiterated, Mag. Cen. 8. p. 350.

In the Gallican Council it was decreed, that Gallican, when the Bishop goes his Canonical Circuit to Confirm, that the Priests be always ready for his Assistance, and that there be Gossips as well in this, as in Baptism; and that the confirmed have his hair cut, Mag. Cent. 8. p. 350.

The Council of Trent about Confirmation C. Trent. Decreed.

1. That whosoever said it was an Idle Ceremony not a Sacrament properly, or that it was formerly used that Children might give an Account of their Faith. 2. That to ascribe Vertue to Chrysm was to wrong the holy Spirit. 3. That every simple Priest is the ordinary Minister for Confirmation and not the Bishop only should be accused. Olian. Cent. 16. p. 417.

By which sayings of the Ancients, Canons, and Decrees of Councils, it appears they had early set a foot something for an Ordinance of the Church enjoyned to be Practised after Baptism, and whereof we give you this brief account from them.

First, as to the Name by which it was called 1. Name. viz. Confirmation. 2. Anointing or Chrysm. 3. Imposition of hands. 4. Perfection.

1. Con-

1. Confirmation, because both *Baptism* and the *Unity* of the Church was thereby confirmed. 2. *Chrism* or anointing, because Oyl mingled with Balsom, the thing used herewith in imitation of the *holy Oyl* used of old. 3. *Imposition* of hands in allusion to the Apostles practise, *Act. 8. 19.* who laid on hands for the Spirit (though this could not properly be so called, because it was but crossing the Forehead with the Finger.) 4. *Perfection*, because they esteemed Baptism imperfect without it, therefore for the first times they used to practise it together.

2 Ground. 2. As to the Grounds upon which it was practised, viz. as an *Apostolical* Tradition handed to them from the *Apostles times* by the Eminent Doctors of the three first Centuries, upon whose Authority it was practised, till confirmed by the Councils before mentioned, viz. *Laodicea, Eliberis, &c.*

3 Manner. 3. As to the manner of performing it viz. by *Crossing* and anointing the Forehead of the Confirmed party, with Oyl and *Chrism*.

4 Admin. 4. As to the *Administrators*, viz. only a Bishop to whom in an especial manner it was entailed, its being unlawful for any other to do it from *Peter* and *Johns* being sent by the Church of *Jerusalem*, to impose hands which *Philip* did not do.

5 Subjects. 5. As to the *Subjects*, viz. All Baptised persons who were either Adult, or Infants, immediately

mediately, or afterwards, Baptised Infants at years of discretion. The *Adult* were first the Catechumens, who were either the Children of Heathen that inclined to Christianity, or the Children of Christians newly come to the Faith, who to their completing in Christianity, were to take these five steps, thus known and distinguished.

1. They were to be *Catechised*, taught and instructed, and then were called the *Catechumeni*. 2. Upon their propounding themselves to *Baptism*, were called the *Competentes*. 3. Being admitted to *Baptism*, were called the *Illuminati* or *initiati*. 4. After *Baptism* being confirmed, were called the *Perfecti*. 5. After *Confirmation* and receiving the *Eucharist*, they were called the *fideles*.

1. *Adult.*

Or, Secondly. Infants who were for the 4, 5, 6 and 7. Cent. the Subjects of it, and with *Baptism*, did receive *Confirmation* and the *Eucharist* immediately, and so esteemed perfect and complete Christians, then it began to be deferred for a week after *Baptism*, the Children wearing the *Baptismal* white Garment all the week and upon the 8 day *Baptism* was perfected by *Confirmation*, as saith *Raban Maurus L. Inst. Cler. c. 30.*

2. Infants. presently.

Or, 3. Such Infants who after they had been *Baptised*, did arrive to knowledge and discretion, and were able to say the Lords Prayer, 10 Commandments, and Creed by heart, as appears by some of those latter Councils.

3. Persons Baptised in Infancy in their Adult state.

And

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And the reason of the said Alteration, as saith *Vice comes*, p. 378. was because about *Charles* the first's time, in the 8 Cent. Adult Baptism, did very much wear off. The People for the most part being now *Christians*, their Children became so numerous, that the Bishop found it too hard a task to perform his part.

Therefore they appointed certain *Visitations*, especially at Easter and *Whitsontide*, to confirm those in their *Diocesses*, that having been Baptised in *Infancy*, were able to give an Account of their Faith, which, saith *Vice comes*, was Practised in several places in the Latin Church.

6. The End 6. As to the end of *this Rite*, viz. For the giving of the Spirit, and conferring of Grace, to perfect and confirm imperfect Baptism, and therefore esteemed a Sacrament of greater force and Virtue than Baptism it self, and therefore to be done with Oyl, typing, figuring, or signing the Spirit.

7. Ceremonies. 7. As to the Ceremonies; they were divers, viz. The party to be confirmed was to be in white Garments, his head bound up in Linnen, the hair of the head to be Cut, and to have Gossips to undertake for them.

8. The Order. 8. As to the Order of Administring it, viz. especially after Baptism (though some of the Catechumens in Imitation of *Ananias* his imposing hands upon *Paul* Act. 9. had it before.) and then had they an immediate right given them to partake of the Eucharist, without which

which they could not be admitted to partake thereof.

9. As to the *Form* in which the Bishop administered it, viz. in these words, *I Sign thee with the Sign of the Cross, and confirm thee with the Chrysm of Salvation in the Name of the Father, Son, and holy Spirit.*

The Form.

The Usage of the Church of Rome.

The Church of Rome observed the very same Order and manner with the same rites and Ceremonies to the same ends and upon the same ground as an Apostolical Tradition, which the former Countries had done; only whereas there began to be some space betwixt the Infants Baptism, and their Confirmation, that they for the most part especially in the latter Centuries have performed them together.

Church of Rome.

Contarenus, Lib. de Sacrament. a great Popish Writer saith, that Thomas Aquinas thought that this Sacrament ought to be given to very young Infants, because they obtain more Grace and therefore more Glory, which custom saith he, we have kept, leaning upon the Authority of so great a Man. Aq. part 3. Q 72. Ar. 8.

Contarenus.

Didoclavus saith in Altar Damasc. Many think it to be expedient rather in the time of Infancy, because the Infant-Age is not capable of Falsion, whereby the effect of the Sacrament may

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may be hindered, and that the Ancient use of the Church favours that Opinion.

Ordo Rom.

In the *Ordo Romanis* An old Popish Missal, it is Recorded, that the Bishop having seated himself in the Church, the Arch-Deacon holding the Chrysm, the Priest presents the Baptised Infants with their Names to the Bishop, who dipping his Finger in the Oyl, and Crossing every one in the Forehead, saith, I Signe thee with the Sign of the Cross, and Confirm thee with the Chrysm of Salvation in the Name of the Father, Son and Spirit; and which Rite they say is confirmed by the Aſſ of the Apostles and opinion of the Fathers from the Scriptures, viz. Act. 8. 17. Acts 19. 6. and Heb. 6. 2. and called Confirmation, because the Unity of the Church was confirmed by the Bishop, as saith Ambrose upon Heb. 6. Haimo and Ansel. Joseph Vice comes. c. 30. p. 373.

C. Trent.

The Council of Trent, as before, decreed, That whosoever should say that Children should first give an account of their Faith before Confirmation should be accursed.

Bellar.

Bellarmino de Sacrament. L. c. 11 saith, that Confirmation confers greater Grace than Baptism, neither can Baptism be perfected without it.

And again Tom. 2. saith, Confirmation is to confer Grace that maketh acceptable, and to strengthen the soul against the Assaults of the Devil, and to be enroled thereby the servants of Christ.

And again in the same Tom. 2. That it is more perfect than Baptism it self, for whereas Baptism may be administred by Ordinary Priests or Deacons, yea even women themselves in case of necessity, this is not to be performed but by the holy hands of a Bishop.

The

The Usage of the Church of England.

The Church of England, though they lop off many of the Ancient and *Popish Superstitions* and *Ceremonies* herein; yet do they retain the thing, viz. *Confirmation* after Baptism by a *Bishop* only, and the Subjects, viz. *Baptized Children*, able to say their Catechism, according to the Decrees of the Council of *Constance*, and the *Gallican Councils* before-mentioned. The whole Rite and Ceremony thereof, with what appertains thereto, you have at large in the *Engl. Liturgy*, in the *Rubrick*; the substance whereof you may please to take as followeth.

Chur. of
Engl.

The Order of Confirmation
or Laying on of Hands upon
Children Baptized, and able
to render an Account of their
Faith according to the Cate-
chism.

TO the end that Confirmation may be administered to the more edifying of such as shall receive it (according to St. Paul's Doctrine, who teacheth that all things should be done in the Church to the Edification of the same) it is thought good that none hereafter shall be confirm-

E

ed,

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ed, but such as can say in their Mother-Tongue the Articles of the Faith, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments, and can also answer to such Questions of the short Catechism as the Bishop (or such as he shall appoint) shall by his discretion appose him; and this Order is most convenient to be observed, for divers Considerations;

First, Because that when Children come to the years of Discretion, and have learned what their Godfathers and Godmothers promised for them in Baptism, they may then themselves, with their own mouth, and with their own consent, openly before the Church, ratifie and confirm the same, and also promise that by the Grace of God, they will evermore endeavour themselves faithfully to observe and keep such things as they by their own mouths and Confession have assented unto.

Secondly, Forasmuch as Confirmation is ministered to them that are baptized, that by Imposition of hands and Prayer, they may receive strength and defence against all Temptations to Sin, and the Assaults of the World and the Devil, it is most meet to be ministered when Children come to this Age, that partly by the frailty of their own Flesh, partly by the Assaults of the World and the Devil, they begin to be in danger to fall into sundry kinds of Sin.

Thirdly, For that it is agreeable with the Usage of the Church in times past; whereby it was accustomed that Confirmation should be ministered to them that were of perfect Age; that they being instructed in Christ's Religion; should openly profess their own Faith, and promise to be obedient to the Will of God.

The

The Order it self, this following Prayer being said.

A Almighty and everlasting God, who hast boughsided to regenerate these thy Servants by Water, and the Holy Ghost, and hast given unto them forgiveness of all their sins; strengthen them, We beseech thee, O Lord, with the Holy Ghost the Comforter, and daily encrease in them thy manifold Gifts of Grace, the Spirit of Wisdom and Understanding, the Spirit of counsel and ghostly strength, the Spirit of knowledge and true Godliness, and fill them O Lord, with the Spirit of thy holy Fear, Amen.

Then shall the Bishop lay his hand upon every
Child severally, saying,

DEfend, O Lord, this
Child with thy hea-
venly Grace, that he
may continue thine for ever,
and daily encrease in thy ho-
ly Spirit more and more,
until he come into thy ever-
lasting Kingdom, Amen.

Then shall the Bishop say,

A Almighty and everlast-
ing God, which ma-
keth us both to Will &
to do those things that be
good & acceptable unto thy
Majesty, We make our hum-
ble supplications unto thee
for these Children, upon
whom, after the example of
the holy Apostles, We have
laid our hands, to certifie
them

them (by this Sign) of thy
Favour and Gracious Good-
ness towards them, let thy
Fatherly Hand, We beseech
thee, be over them, let thy
Holy Spirit ever be with
them, and so lead them in
the knowledge and obedience
of thy Word, that in the
end they may obtain the ever-
lasting Life, through our
Lord Jesus, who with thee
and the Holy Ghost, liveth
and reigneth, one God, world
without end, Amen.

Then the Bishop shall *bleſs* the Children,
ſaying,

*The Bleſſing of God Almighty, the
Father, Son and Holy Ghost, be upon
you and remain with you for ever and
ever, Amen.*

After

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After are added these Directions relating to
Confirmation, viz.

That the Curate of every Parish, or some other at his appointment, shall diligently on Sundays and Holy-days, half an hour before Evening-Prayer, openly in the Church, instruct and examine so many Children of his Parish sent unto him, as the time will serve, and as he shall think convenient, in some part of this Catechism.

And all Fathers, Mothers, Masters and Dames shall cause their Children, Servants and Apprentices (which have not learned their Catechism) to come to the Church at the time appointed, and obediently to hear and be ordered by the Curate, until such time as they have learned all that is here appointed for them to learn, and whensoever the Bishop shall give knowledge for Children to be brought before him to any convenient place for their Confirmation, then shall the Curate of every Parish either bring or send in writing the Names of all those Children of his Parish which can say the Articles of the Faith, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments; and also how many of them can answer to the other Questions contained in this Catechism.

And there shall none be admitted to the Holy Communion until such time as he can say the Catechism, and be confirmed.

Dr. Cave, in his late *Primitive Christianity*, Dr. Cave.
upon the Subject, saith of our English Confirmation, That almost exactly according to the
Primitive usage, it is still retained and practised
in our Church at this day; and happy were it for
us, were it kept up in its due power and vigour:
Sure I am that many of our chiefest Breaches and
Controversies in Religion, do, if not wholly, in
a great measure, owe their Birth and Rise to the
neglect and contempt of this excellent Usage of
the Church. p. 219.

Concerning which Rite, as used by the
Church of England, we observe,

1. The Name given it, viz. Confirmation.
2. The Subjects, viz. Children Baptized in
their Infancies, that are taught their Cate-
chism, and are able to say the Creed, Lord's
Prayer, and Ten Commandments in the English
Tongue.
3. The Administrators, a Bishop only; and
therefore the Ceremony was so vulgarly called
Bishoping.
4. The Force and manner, as expr. s'd by
the Bishop's putting the hand upon the Head
of the Children, and saying that Form of
words directed.
5. The Ends, as declared, viz. 1. To con-
firm Infants Baptized, and the Promise of the
Sureties made for them therein. 2. To give
the Spirit for the encrease of Grace, and
strength against Temptations. 3. To confirm
the Unity and Order of the Church, and or-
derly to admit them therein.
6. The Time when administered; betwixt

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their Baptism and the Supper, as soon as they can say their Catechism.

7. The Grounds upon which they assert; viz. The Usage of the Ancient Church, Decrees of Councils, Apostles Practice.

Performed by them with very little Reverence or Caution, either how or upon whom they do it, saith Mr. Hammer and Mr. Baxter.

Mr. Hammer, p. 47. Though they deem it to be of some weight and consequence, yet as used by them, it is little less than ridiculous, a meer vain and empty Ceremony; or (as the Saxon-Confession terms the Romish Sacrament of Confirmation) *Inanis Umbra*, an Empty Shadow; and *Hominiis*, a vain Invention of Superstitious men.

Mr. Baxter, In his Book Of Confirmation, p. 155. saith, To his knowledge it was done by the best of them in a careless budling way, mumbling over a few formal Prayers upon persons that they knew not whether they were Christians or Infidels, or that they did so much as know there was a God.

In the Fifth place, We come to give you an Account how this Rite hath been asserted and pleaded by some, both of the Independent and Presbyterian Perswasion; so especially by Mr. Jonathan Hammer, in his Book called Confirmation the ancient way of compleating Church-Members: Written with great applause in the year 1657. And Mr. Baxter, in confirmation thereof, in his Book called Confirmation and Restoration the necessary means of Reformation

formation and Reconciliation: Who do therein undertake to prove the necessity of *Confirmation*, a laying on of the hands of the *Presbytery* for the *confirming and compleating Infants-Baptism*, perfecting their *Church-Membership* upon their *Profession and Confession of Faith*; and which they endeavour to make good by this five-fold Argument.

1. By *Scripture*. 2. By the *Testimony of Fathers*. 3. By *Councils*. 4. By the *Judgment and Practice of the Waldenses*. 5. By the *Judgment of many of the Reformed Divines*.

I. As to *Scripture*.

The main *Scripture* he insists on to prove this *Confirmation* by (and which as modestly said, is a *probable ground* for the the same) is that of *Heb. 6. 2. And laying on of Hands*. Where, as urged, it is made one of the *Principles of the Doctrine of Christ*. Where,

1. Its *Place* is to be taken notice of, being next after *Baptism*, and as it were, an *Appendix* thereof, and for the most part immediately following it in such *Adults* as were baptized, and the next *Priviledge* in the Church as such did enjoy who were baptized in *Infancy*.

2. Because the best *Interpreters* do usually understand this of one or more of the three *Particulars* that *Imposition of hands* hath relation to, *viz.*

1. Of the *extraordinary Gifts* of the Holy Ghost, which was conferr'd at first upon many new *Converts* by the laying on of the *Apostles hands*, *Acts 8. 17, 19.*

2. Of

2. Of the *Officers* of the Church who were ordained and set apart unto their Offices by Prayer and Imposition of hands. This *Pareus* in *Heb. 6. 1.* *Initiata erat Doctrina de Donis Spiritualibus & Ministerio Ecclesie*; It was an Initial Doctrine concerning Spiritual Gifts and the Ministry of the Church, *Ames. in Bellarm. Enervat.* By Imposition of Hands is meant the whole Ministry; *Per Impositionem Manuum Ministerium totum intelligitur.*

3. Of the Confirmation of such who had been baptized, who before the Church made a Profession of Faith, the *Adult* before Baptism, the *Baptized Infant* before Confirmation. So *Piscator*, *Beza*, *Rivet*, *Doctors of Leyden*, *Anselm*, *Calvin*, *Hyperius*, *Illyricus*, *Mr. Deering* upon the place: By these and other Expositors, it is said, is this place of Scripture understood, in part at least, of Imposition of Hands in Confirmation; which therefore in their apprehension, is warranted by it, as a *Doctrine Fundamental* that ought to be known by all, and a thing practised by, and taking its Rise from the *Apostles*. And,

2. By Testimony
of Faith.

II. That it was also as an Apostolical Practice received by the Church in after-Ages, *Cassander* (that Learned Papist, and so well vers'd in the *Ancients*, even to Miracle) tells us, *Semper in Ecclesia religiosissime observatum fuisse*, To have been always most religiously observed in the Church; and therefore have you an Account thereof from many of the *Fathers*, viz. *Dionys. Areopag.* *Clem. Roman.* *Justin Martyr's Responses*, *Tertullian*, *Cyprian*, *Ambrose*,

brose, Jerom, &c. Which being all before mentioned, we need not repeat. And,

III. The Decrees of *Councils*, confirming 3. Dec. of Councils.
Confirmation to have been an *Ancient* and *General Practice* in the Churches of Christ; of which two only are mentioned, viz. The *Laod.* before recited, about the year 300; and the Council of *Eliberis* in *Spain*, in 305. And,

IV. By the Judgment and Practice of the 4. Wald. Practice.
Waldenses; who received it as an *Apostolical* Institution, as appears by their *Apology* and *Confession of Faith* exhibited to *Vladislaus K.* of *Hungary*, Anno 1504. witnessing to *Infants-Baptism*, and their *Confirmation* after, upon their *Personal Confession*; which he mentions at large out of the same *Apology*, And,

V. From the compliance of the succeeding 5. Reformed Churches.
Reformed Churches; amongst whom the *Church of England* is mentioned as one, who took much of the *Order of Confirmation* (as he saith) from that of the *Waldenses*; part whereof he repeats; especially the *Conclusion*, that *debars any from the Holy Communion*, that were not confirmed; and adds thereto the *good wishes*, that *Hommius*, *Calvin*, the *Leyd. Professors*, &c. that this *Business of Confirmation* was drained from *Antiebristean Mixtures*, both as to *Name*, *Nature*, *Matter*, *Form*, *Administrator* and *Subject* also; the *Romish Church* confirming *Children* in their *Infancies*.

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In whose *Hypothesis* we have first,

1. The *Name* they give this Rite; namely, *Confirmation*.
2. The *Subjects*, Adult Persons, all baptized in Infancy.
3. The *Administrators*, viz. The Presbytery-Elderſhip.
4. The *End*, viz. To confirm Baptiſm, give the Spirit, and orderly to admit into the Church.
5. The *Time* when to be adminiſtered, viz. Betwixt Baptiſm and the Lord's Supper, when they give an Account of their Faith, and deſire Church-Communion.
6. The *Grounds* upon which they aſſert it; viz. 1. *Scriptural*; eſpecially from Heb. 6. 2. 2. The Sayings of the *Ancients*, and Decrees of *Councils*, confirming it to be an Apoſtolical Practice.
7. The *Uſage* and Practice of the Ancient and Modern Churches, eſpecially that of the Famous *Waldenſes*.

6. Bapti-
zed

Churches

J. Fisher.

Jo. Grif-

ſith.

W. Rider

T. Gran-

tham.

6. The Uſage of ſeveral Baptized Churches
in the Nation.

Sixthly and laſtly, We come to give you an Account how that this Rite of *Laying on of Hands* hath been aſſerted and praſtiſed by ſeveral Baptized Congregations, who have by their *Writings* maintained and defended, That Laying on of Hands upon all Baptized Believers, is an Ordinance of Jeſus Chriſt; eſſentially neceſſary to Church-Fellowſhip and Communion, and that none are to be admitted to the Lord's Supper without it; and which they endeavour to make good, eſpecially from Heb. 6. 2. Which they conclude to be a Laying on of Hands upon all Baptized Believers.

1. Becauſe

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29

1. Because it is reckoned amongst the *Foundation-Principles, Doctrines and Oracles* of God. And, 2. Because they find the *Church of Samaria, Acts 8. 17.* and the *Church of Ephesus did practise* accordingly immediately after Baptism; which therefore they do conclude was both *Christ's Precept* and the *Practice* of all the Churches in the *New Testament*.

Amongst whom respecting this Practice, we observe,

1. The Name they give this Rite, viz. *Laying on of Hands.* Name.

2. The Subjects, viz. *All Baptized Believers, Men and Women.* Subject.

3. The Administrators viz. *The Elders or Presbyters.* Admin.

4. The End, for the promised Spirit to confirm the Baptized, and orderly to admit into the Church. End.

5. The Time or Order in which this is administered; betwixt *Baptism* and the *Supper*, or presently after the *Baptism.* Time.

6. The principal Ground upon which they assert it, viz. *The Scripture*; especially from *Heb. 6. 2. Acts 8. 17, 19.* Principal Ground

Thus have you an Account of this Rite, not only from *Scriptures*, but how it hath been *owned* and *practised* since the first times, by several sorts; and who notwithstanding the vast *differences* among them in the Ceremonial part, yet do all of them *harmoniously* agree in the following *Substantials*, viz.

That there is a warrantable ground to conclude

Wherein all Parties do agree.

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clude that the Hands of the Bishop, Elder, or Presbyter should be imposed upon every Baptized Person for the receiving of the Spirit, or Confirmation, and that without it none ought to be admitted to the Lord's Supper.

It remains therefore in the next place, that we consider the said Grounds upon which so great an Ordinance is enjoined, and which we find to be either Tradition or the Scripture.

1. That of Tradition (which is principally asserted by the first four) is made good either from the Sayings of the Ancients, and Decrees of Councils, or the Usage of the ancient Churches.

2. And that of Scripture, which is principally urged by the two latter, is especially from Heb. 6. 2. compared A.C. 8. 17. & 19. 6. Which we shall examine distinctly and apart.

Tradition.
on.

And first, As to the Sayings of the Ancients, that are avouched to make this good, we shall first consider what they say about this Rite; and 2. Of what Credit and Authority the said Authors are who be produced for the same.

And first, As to the Rite it self, which they would make us believe to be so great an Ordinance of Jesus Christ, we find it to be so blasphemous and Ridiculous, that the very naming of the Particulars thereof, may be sufficient to detect the Folly and Impiety thereof to all discerning Christians. Whether respecting the Name, which they call Chrysm, Unction, Perfection, Confirmation, of which the Scripture is so much a stranger; or the Nature, which

which must be by putting the Sign of the Cross with a Bishop's greas'd Finger, in the Forehead of the Confirmed, with these words of Blasphemy, *I sign thee with the Sign of the Cross, and with the Chrysm of Salvation, in the Name of the Father, Son and Spirit, the Party being in a white Garment, his Head bound with Linnen, his Hair cut, and attended with Gossips or Sureties.* And this is that which the several fore-cited Popes and Fathers have reported to be *Apostolical*; and the several Councils have by their *Canons* and *Decrees* determined and enjoin'd as the great Sacrament of *Confirmation*, and so transcendent also to *Baptism* it self; and which without dispute (we must believe) was so much the appointment and practice of Christ and the Apostles, and as yet practis'd accordingly by the Church of Rome to this day.

Concerning which Hommius tells us, *That Hommius it is not only unknown and contrary to the Scriptures, but blasphemous and Idolatrous, and the vain Invention of superstitious men.*

And Tilenus, upon their lifting it up above *Tilenus Baptism*, and confining it only to a Bishop's hand, saith, *That they make an Excrement of Antichrist so much more excellent than the Sacrament of Christ, by how much they make a Bishop excel a common Priest, or an ordinary person.* Syn-tag. Part 2. c. 53. §. 15.

And Amesius saith, *The Reasons given by the Amef. Papists for the same, are both empty, and impious.* Eel. Enervat. c. 4.

And notably Mr. Calvin, In *Profa. ante Cate. Calvin. ebis. inter Opuscul.* That beyond measure they have

have deckt this *Adulterous Confirmation* like an Harlot, with great splendor of Ceremonies, and many pompous Gauderies; moreover, while they will adorn it, they do it with execrable Blasphemies, boasting that it is a Sacrament more worthy than Baptism, and calling them half-Christians; whoever have not been besmear'd with their stinking Oyl; but in the mean while their whole action contains nothing else but *Histrionical Gestures*, or rather wanton *Apish Plays* without any *Art* or emulation, &c.

2. *What* Secondly, From the *Authorities* themselves
their Au urged in proof hereof; concerning whom, we
thorities. may so well say, as is the *Doctrine*, so are the
Doctōrs, viz. Those that are first cited to deliver the same, the very naming of whom, may be sufficient to detect the Cheat, we having already by *substantial* evidence proved, that all those first-recited Authorities, viz. *Dionys. Areopag. Clem. 4. Ep. Justin Martyr's Respons. Hyginus's Decree*, and the *Decretal Epistles* of those first Popes, to have been *Impious Lies* and *Forgeries*, things that in after-Ages, by the Rise of the *Mystery of Iniquity*, were feigned and invented by some *Monks* and *Friers*, and put upon those men of Name of the first Ages, the better to countenance those *Anti-christian Impleties* that were to be imposed upon the *World*, for *Apōstolick*; for by such *Lies* and *Forgeries*, did the man of sin ascend the Throne. And is there not good ground think you, to suspect the Justice and Truth of that Cause, that cannot otherwise be defended nor maintained, but by suborned Witnesses,

nesses, and *Knights of the Post*; for upon no better Authority; have they imposed this which they call the Sacred Rite of *Confirmation*, *Infants-Baptism*, *Exorcism*, and a hundred ridiculous Ceremonies more, which they would persuade us to believe were Apostolical; though as to this of *Confirmation*, some of themselves are constrained to acknowledge, *nec ab Aposto- Rivet.*
lis, nec à Christo fuisse Institutio, &c. That it was neither instituted by Christ or his Apostles, but by Pope Calixtus, Anno 218. *Rivet's Controv. Tom. 2.* Yet so intoxicated with the Whores Cup were all these *Councils*, upon no better grounds to decree it, and all these after-Doctors, as *Ambrose*, *Jerom*, *Austin*, and others, to assert and plead it for an Ordinance of Christ; which was not only so contrary to the Scripture, but so blasphemous and ridiculous, as before:

And if it had been an *Apostolical Tradition* to practise this, as the first *Councils* decreed, and the Fathers and others practised, viz. for many hundred years, as a Baptismal Rite, to be performed at one and the same time with Baptism, whether upon Infants or Adult, and to whom also as perfect and compleat Christians, they gave the Eucharist; how came the after-Councils to be so bold, to alter and change it from *Infancy* to the *Adult* state, putting it upon them only for so many Ages; and the Church of *Rome* afterwards to alter and change it again, returning it to its first practice, leaning upon the *Validity* of those first *Authorities*; concerning whom, though it is no wonder that they should hold fast such impious

Forgeries, and have recourse to such lying *Fables*, to maintain it; yet it is matter of admiration, to find our *Protestant-Writers* and *Churches* to fly to these *Authorities*, both *Fathers* and *Councils*, to create some colourable pretence for Confirmation?

*Objection
as to the
Waldens.
Church.*

But what do you say to the *Practise* of the *Waldensian Church*; to whom you have ascribed so much *Authentickness*? Who, as you observe, were such early Witnesses for *Truth*; as well as eminent opposers of the *Romish Church* in all their *Fopperies*; who yet, as it appeareth, have asserted and practised Confirmation, as you have at large in the forecited *Apology* to King *Laodislav*, King of *Hungary* and *Bohemia*.

Ansiv.

To which I say, That it is most manifest, as I have already demonstrated that that *Apology* was not from the *Waldenses*, as the Preamble it self declares; but from some of those Professors distinguished by the name *Hussites*, who held much with those of the Reformed Way in *Germany*: and not the *Taborites* or *Waldensian Brethren*, who also inhabited in *Bohemia*, and other parts of *Germany*, *Poland*, and *Hungary*. And that those true *Waldenses* were of a quite contrary Opinion, appears by their Ancient Confessions of Faith; an eminent Instance whereof you'll find in their Treatise of *Sacraments*, in *Paul Perin*, p. 329. and in *Morland's History*, p. 175. in these words;
viz.

As

As for the Sacrament of Confirmation, which we find not instituted either by Christ or his Apostles; for Christ, the Pattern of all his Church, was not confirmed in his Person, and he doth not require that there should be any such thing in Baptism, but only pure Water; and that such a Sacrament is not found needful for Salvation; whereby God is blasphemed, and which was introduced by the Devil's instigation, to seduce the People, and to deprive them of the Faith of the Church, and that by such means they might be drawn the more to believe the Ceremonies, and the necessity of Bishops.

It is also to be taken notice of, that Justin Justin Martyr, in his Apology, giving an Account Martyr of the Faith and Practice of the Churches in give no those days to Antonius Pius, takes not the least account notice hereof, though he recounts all their in his A- Services and Ceremonies in Worship with pology, great Plainness.

It is also not unworthy our observation, Novati- that the Novatians, that worthy famous Church ans. and People, did, as Joseph Vicecomes tells us, oppose this Butiness of Confirmation in Cen- tury 3. Vicecomes, l. 28. p. 372.

And also it is manifest out of Breerwood, Nor in the eminent Recorder of the Antiquities of the the Greek Greek Churches, that the Greeks did impugn Churches and reject that of Confirmation. Br. p. 127. out of Pas. De Rep. Mosch. p. 40. And particularly tells us that the Nestorians did not pra- Nestori- cise it. p. 124. out of Bib. Pat. p. 1054. ans.

That the Abyssines inhabiting Prester John's Abyssines Countrey, did not practise it. Br. p. 167. Ex Alv. Hist. Aethiop. c. 5.

Muscov.

And that the *Muscovites* omit it, Br. p. 136.
Ex Fo. Metrop. Russ. in Epist. ad Episc. Rom.
apud Sigism. De Reb. Musc. p. 31.

Copti

And that there is no mention either of the
nor *Ja-Copti* in Egypt. or *Jacobites* in Syria, that ever
cobites. practised this Rite.

It is also manifest out of the *Confessions* of
Faith of the *Belgick Churches*, esteeming them-
selves the true and *immediate Successors* of the
Waldenses; recorded at large in the *Dutch*
Martyrol. or *Bloody Theater*, printed in 1660.
That there is no mention of any such practice
as Imposition of Hands upon all baptized per-
sons amongst them either formerly or lat-
terly.

3. The

In the next place we shall consider the Scri-
Scripture pture-ground that is urged and produced in
Ground. proof hereof, especially by the two latter;
which we find to be principally from Heb. 6. 2.

Mr. Han-
mer.

The *Doctrin* of Baptism, laying on of Hands,
Ἐπιθεσις τε χειρῶν, which Mr. Hanmer
acknowledgeth to be the chief; and (though
as he modestly expresseth himself) but a proba-
ble ground from the Scripture to found it upon,
being there made one of the Principles of the
Doctrin of Christ, and placed next after Bap-
tism, and as it were an Appendix thereof, and
which for the most part, immediately followed
it in such Adult as were baptized, and the next
priviledge of the Church (he saith) that such
did enjoy as had been baptized in Infancy; and
that many of the best Interpreters did usually un-
derstand this place to mean, in part at least, of
Imposition of Hands in Confirmation; though he
doubt

doth confess others did also take it to mean Imposition of Hands in Ordination; and others, the whole Doctrine of laying on of hands, as express in the Scripture; but especially leans upon the Tradition, and the Usage, and Practice of the Church in all Ages, p. 26, 27.

1. To whom, and to all of his Perswasion, I say, That if their *Infants Baptism* be a Nullity, which they pretend hereby especially to confirm, and is the main design of his and Mr. Baxter's Treatises; that their practice hereupon falls to the ground; for if their Hypothesis be naught and rotten, their Thesis cannot be sound that is built upon it: but that it is so, the foregoing Treatise of that Subject doth amply discover; proving with great clearness, that it was an *Invention* and *Institution* of man, yea, of the man of Sin; calculated on purpose to out Christ's Baptism, and to defile his Church; and this appearing to be of the same Piece, contrived and ordered by the same Heads and Hands, it is meet, that as they have lived, so they should die together.

And secondly, We may conclude rationally, If Infants were capable of Baptism, they were as capable at the same time, of laying on of hands (as first instituted and practised) and of the Supper also, as Austin and others tell us they had them all together, and not first baptize them, and then many years after (and no body knows how and when) confirm them; for if one be a Foundation or beginning Doctrine, as the other, they have done best and most according to Rule and Reason,

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that have practised it immediately, and not deferr'd it.

And thirdly, Since the Scripture is, as *confess'd*, but a probable ground, and that of *Tradition, Antiquity*, and constant Usage of the Church, the more *certain*; the latter appearing so invalid upon all the *foregoing Considerations*, that faint insinuation from that Scripture, cannot be a ground *sufficient* to build that Practice upon.

And to which lastly, we will add Mr. Baxter's Sober Cautions, enough to shake the confidence of any that have no better Ground for the Practice; as we find them in p. 127, 128, 129. of his *Confirmation*: Where, after he had with all his might endeavour'd to establish it both from Scripture and Antiquity, doth, according to his wonted manner, in a few Lines unlay more than he had said in all the rest, viz.

M. Baxt. 1. That we do not find that God instituted this Sober Sign as a Matter of necessity, still without interruptions to be used; but only that by holy men it was applied as a convenient Sign or Gesture to the works in which they used it; even as lifting up of hands in Prayer, was ordinarily used as a fit Gesture, not wilfully to be neglected without cause, and yet not of flat necessity; or as Kneeling in Prayer, is ordinarily meet, but not always necessary; we find no more Scripture for the one or for the other: which shows how little Reason there is to make it matter of Necessity. The Ancient Church also used it so variously, as that it is plain they fixed it to no one Case alone; of the divers Cases in which they imposed hands on the

the Catechumens, and four times on the Penitents and divers others, as, saith he, you may see in Albaspinæus's Observat. p. 31, 32.

2. We find that Kneeling in Prayer, and lifting up of hands, were often omitted; so we find that sometimes the Holy Ghost is given before Baptism or Imposition of Hands, Acts 10. And we find not that the Apostles used it at all, viz. for Confirmation; though I confess the Negative Arguing is infirm; yet it seems not probable that this was always done.

3. It was somewhat suspicious to find in Justin Martyr's Description of the Christian Churches practices, no mention of this, nor any Sacrament but Baptism and the Lord's Supper, nor any of the Roman Ceremonies; and Irenæus and some others also are silent in it too.

4. God maketh no Ceremonies under the Gospel so necessary, except the two Sacraments; nor layeth so great a stress on them as under the Law; and therefore we are not to interpret the Gospel as laying men's Salvation, or the Peace of the Church on any Ceremonies, unless we find it clearly express'd.

5. For all that I have said from Scripture for Imposition of Hands in Confirmation (though the Lawfulness of it is proved past Doubt) yet the proof of the Duty of using it, is liable to so many Objections, as that I must needs confess that the Gospel-tenderness, and the sense of our mutual Infirmities, and our care of tender Consciences, and of the Churches Peace, should restrain all the Sons of Piety and Peace from making it a matter of flat necessity, and forcing them that scruple to submit to it.

The Scrip-
ture-Gr.
upon wh
the Bapt.
have foun-
ded it.

We come in the next place to consider the Scripture-Grounds upon which the Baptists have asserted this Rite, and founded this Practice of imposing hands upon all Baptized Believers; and so essentially necessary to Church-Communion, and which, as before, you find to be especially held forth from *Heb. 6. 12.* Though affirmed not with that *Sobriety* and *Modesty* as the other from *Probability*, but rather *Infallibility*; and therefore impose it accordingly, denying *Fellowship* to any that do not so receive it; and as some have in Print asserted, as neither being *Babes* in Christ, nor having *Communion* with God; as Mr. Griffith in his Book hath it, call'd *God's Oracle*; p. 87. And the reason of this their great Confidence from this Text, is, as you have heard, two-fold; first, Because Laying on of hands is reckoned amongst the *beginning-Teachings*. And secondly, Because they find it, as they say, practised accordingly, *Acts 8. 17. Acts 19. 6.*

To the Trial and Examination thereof, we shall therefore apply our selves, and see whether these have discovered a better Basis to found this Practice upon, than those that have gone before.

And in order thereto, we shall in the first place lay down these two following Principles, so fully owned by themselves, as a Line to carry us through the Work, viz.

1. That to every Ordinance of Christ there must be some plain positive word of Institution to confirm it. And neither Humane Tradition,

nor

nor far-fetcht Consequence and Inference, such as the many Volumes that have been written from Circumcision and Federal Holiness to assert Infants-Baptism to be an Ordinance of Christ, which no ordinary capacity can reach, and only men of Parts and Abilities can trace and follow in their Meanders.

2. That to practise any thing in the worship of God for an Ordinance of his, without an Institution, is Will-Worship and Superstition. But how their Assertions will comport with these honest Protestant Principles, we shall presently see.

The great Text urged for the Institution of this Ordinance, is, *Heb. 6. 1, 2. Therefore leaving the Principles of the Doctrine of Christ, let us go on to perfection, not laying again the foundation of Repentance from Dead Works, and of Faith towards God, of the Doctrine of Baptism, and of laying on of hands, and of Resurrection of the Dead, and of Eternal Judgment.*

This is the Text which is affirmed to be the *Grant* great Charter of the Church for this Point of Faith and Practice; but how to find the least *Warranty* for the same therein, we see not. If it was indeed said, Let all baptized Believers have hands laid upon them; with as much plainness, as Let all Believers be baptized, *Mat. 28. 29. Acts 10. 48.* Or, Let all Baptized Believers eat the Lord's Supper, *1 Cor. 11. 24. Acts 2. 41, 42.* It was something to the purpose. But

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Obj. 1.

But is it not reckoned amongst the Principles, Foundation, Doctrine and Oracles of God?

Answ.

It is very true, the Doctrine of Laying on of hands is here reckoned amongst the Principles of the Doctrine of Christ [or his beginning-teachings]; but then it must be supposed to be such a laying on of hands as was somewhere taught and practised. But such a laying on of hands upon all Baptized Believers, we find no where taught or Practised. Jesus Christ our great Example (as the Waldenses so well observe) had no hands laid upon him by John Baptist after he baptized him; neither did he lay hands upon all his Disciples before they broke Bread; neither did he give one word of it in his Commission upon his Ascension; nor do we read that this Church of the Hebrews practised any such thing; for there is no mention that the 120 had hands so laid upon them; nor the 3000 in Chap. 2. or 5000 in Chap. 4. after their Baptism, before they broke Bread: Neither do we find the least of it in any other of the Churches in the New Testament; neither in Samaria, by Philip, after he baptized them, nor Corinth, Philippi, Coloss, Thessalonica, Rome, the Churches of Galatia, Churches in Asia, Smirna, Thyatira, Pergamus, Sardis, Philadelphia; no, nor in Ephesus: It is true, Paul laid hands upon twelve of their number, upon another occasion, as Peter and John did in Samaria; whereof you have an Account hereafter; nor in the Churches in Syria, Antioch, Lystra, Derbe, &c.

But

But why should laying on of hands be reckoned amongst the beginning-Principles, and called the Doctrine of Laying on of hands, if it was not to be practised by all? for none doubts but laying on of hands was a Practice, and this Practice was to be taught to all Baptized Believers; yea, the Babes in Christ; and therefore must it needs be practised by all.

This, it is true, has gone for the Institution *Ans.* and great Ground upon which it hath been urged and imposed; but how much of Fallacy and Falshood is in this Argument, you will easily discern, as though no act done upon, or Practice done by others, might be matter of Doctrine or teaching to us, without being engaged in our own persons to do the same: were not all the Miracles that Christ and his Apostles did, matter of Doctrine, and much Edification and Instruction from them, and yet not for our imitation and practice?

But this in the Text respects some of *Obj. 3.* Christ's beginning-teachings; his first words, that is, Milk for Babes, and can you tell us of any but such as is proper for all baptized Babes, or new-baptized Believers?

Yes no doubt; for what say you to those *Ans.* words of Christ in the Commission it self, which you cannot deny to be beginning-words? Mar. 16. Where it is expressly said, That the Baptized shall in his Name cast out Devils, speak with new Tongues, take up Serpents, drink poyson, and not hurt them; and also shall lay hands

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hands on the sick, and they shall recover. And so did the baptized Believers accordingly in those days, going out and preaching, the Lord working with them, and confirming the Word with Signs following: But is this the standing Ordinance to all baptized Believers to the world's end? This was indeed that *laying on of hands* properly called *Confirmation*, whereas afterwards a laying on of hands of another nature, was so called, and introduced; so that here you have then a laying on of hands amongst Christ's first Teachings for Tongues, Healing and Miracles necessary and profitable to be taught to all, even the meanest Babes, for Confirmation; as Heb. 2. 3, 4. 1 Cor. 14. 22. Acts 8. 8. Mark 16. 20. Which yet I presume none will say that every Believer ought to practise.

Answ. 2. Secondly, If every one of these Principles in Heb 6. are so absolutely to be taken in by Babes, and without which, we are not to esteem them communicable; what do you say to the Doctrine of Baptisms in the Text, one of the Principles and Foundations of the Gospel? it is not said the Doctrine of Baptism. Must all be baptized with the Baptism of the Spirit and of Suffering also, or not to be received into Communion?

Answ. 3. And Thirdly, As to Laying on of Hands mentioned amongst these Principles in the Text, as it may respect the Laying on of hands upon the Ministry, for their solemn Investiture into their Office, whether Deacons, Acts 6, Elders,

Elders, 1 Tim. 1. 14. or Messengers, 'Acts 14. (whereby they are set apart to *transact* in the whole Order, and in all the Ordinances of God's House; and wherein every particular Member comes to be concerned, not only respecting the *Administrations* performed by them, but the *reciprocal Duty* incumbent upon each of them towards those their *Overseers* so set over them.) It becomes necessary therefore to be taught, known, and understood by all, and that in the beginning-Teachings, though all and every Member are not concerned in the *Personal Practice* thereof; for all are not *Prophets, Apostles, Teachers*. And it is most remarkable, that the *Doctrine* or Teaching of laying on of hands, is all that is mentioned in this Scripture; all baptized Believers must be taught it, that's plain; but that they are obliged therefore to practise it, is not here or elsewhere to be found.

But what do you say to *Acts 8.17.& 19.6.* *Obj. 4.*
Are there not two express *Presidents* for such a laying on of Hands immediately after Baptism, as we infer from hence, concluding that these two Texts aforesaid, give sufficient warranty so to determine?

It is true, this hath been so received and *Ans. 4.*
urged by those that so practise; but how *warrantably*, we shall farther examine. We read indeed of laying on of hands for the giving of the Spirit in three places; one whereof, *Acts 9. 17.* was before Baptism; and these two mentioned, after; so that there is no positive Conclusion

elusion to be fetcht from the Presidents, whether before or after; as it was in the matter of *Healing*, which was given sometimes by laying on of *hands*, sometimes by *words* of Faith spoken to the Sick, sometimes by *Prayer*, sometimes by *sending Handkerchiefs*, sometimes by their very *Shadows*; so also was the Spirit given sometimes by *laying on of hands*, sometimes by *Prayer*, sometimes by *Preaching* or *Prophecy*, sometimes before, sometimes after *Baptism*.

But concerning these two Scriptures so much insisted upon, and *imposed* to be the *President* and *Pattern* for all Churches, and for every *Member* in the Church, let us put them to trial.

As to that of *Samaritis*, it is said, that several being *converted* in that City, and baptized by *Philip*, who wrought many *Miracles*, and continued some time with them, as *v. 13*: yet did he not impose hands upon any of them that we read of. *The Church of Jerusalem* bearing that *Samaritis* had received the Word of God, and that the Spirit was fallen upon none of them (*viz.* in a visible manner which was the proper phrase attributed to those extraordinary measures of the Spirit so frequently given to the Saints in those days; as, *Acts 10. 44. 11. 15, 16, 17*. Which sometimes did fall upon them before *Baptism*, as *Acts 10.* and sometimes after, as *Acts 2, 1. 4. 31.* without laying on of hands) did therefore send *Peter* and *John*, who it seems, were extraordinarily gifted by God; so that
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on whomsoever *they* prayed and laid hands, the Spirit was visibly, extraordinarily and immediately given; as ver. 18. As healing to the sick, by those that had that Gift also given by God, (from whom every good Gift came) and who accordingly, 'tis said, laid their hands upon them, ; but how many of *them* 'tis not said; surely not upon all; for *Simon* by his prophane Offer, discovered he had neither received the Wisdom nor Grace thereof, and had neither Lot or part therein, though baptized; and so 'tis said they received the Spirit in such a manner that it was visible to the Spectators.

And as to that of *Ephesus*, Acts 19. 6. *Paul* it seems, finding some of the Church there, that had not received the Spirit after they had believed and were baptized, viz. in that visible manner so usually given in those days, layes his hands upon twelve men of their number; (it is not said all the Church) who thereupon, did immediately receive the Spirit, in such a degree, that it was demonstrated by speaking with Tongues and Prophecyng.

So that in neither of these two places (so much urged for the Explanation of Heb. 6. 2. And to be a President and Rule for us, to the end of the world) can we find that there was a laying on of hands immediately after Baptism, nor with any certainty upon all and every Member of the Church, nor to such an end as can be attainable in after-times.

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And as to that of 2 *Tim.* 1. 6. Wherein *Paul* exhorts *Timothy* to stir up the Gift that was in him by putting on of his hands, asserted to be a laying on of hands of this kind, as urged, not *Ordination*; is,

First, a begging, not proving the Question.

Secondly, It is manifest that *Timothy* had the hands of the *Presbytery* laid on him, which none doubts to be *Ordination*; and that *Paul* and *Barnabas* were the *Presbyters* that did ordain in those Churches of *Asia*, is very manifest, *Acts* 14. 23. Wherein by God's *Blessing* upon his Ordinance; there was a Gift received, and to be stirred up; and therefore in saying, Stir up the Gift that was in him by putting on of his hands, and neglect not the Gift that was in him, which was given by the laying on of the hands of the *Presbytery*, whereof *Paul* was one, seems to mean one and the same thing, and not two things, as urged; and to be no other than those ordinary Ministerial *Attainments*, which by giving attendance to Reading, Meditation, Prayer, *Exhortation* and *Doctrine*, was to be increased and stirred up.

Therefore since not the least Syllable of *Institution*, neither *Precept* nor *President* can be found out for such a *Practice*, may we not fully conclude in the words of our *Agreement*, that for any to practise any thing in the Word of God without an *Institution* from the Word of God, is *Will-worship* and *Superstition*.

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But if this be not the laying on of hands *Obj. 6.* intended in the Text, what is it? If we have mis'd the sence and scope of the Apostle, pray you give us a better, or let ours stand.

Suppose we are not able to tell you, nor *Ans.* to be positive or peremptory in the Case, many things being hard and difficult to be understood, which some that are ignorant wrest, &c. would our Ignorance warrant you, to set up your Inferences and Conclusions, as *Ch.* *ra*cles and Ordinances, without any *Evidence* or Authority from the Word, and be thereby confirmed in your confident Assertions? It may be enough to have evinced to you, that yours is not, cannot be that *Ordinance* of Christ, that Principle and Foundation-*Doctrin*e, so confidently asserted by you. Yet not to leave you in the Dark, take here my apprehension of this Text, and wherein I am perswaded I have the mind of Christ, *viz.*

The Apostle, the better to gain their *Atten-* *Heb. 6.*
tion to the great *Doctrin*e of the *High Priest-* 12. o-
hood, tells them in the foregoing Chapter, by *pened.*
way of reproof, how dull of *bearing* they had been in times past, how little they had *im-*
proved Time or Talent, what little progress they had made in *Christianity*, and what Babes they yet were therein, and who, *instead* of *bearing strong meat* in *Doctrin*e he was delivering to them, they stood in more need of *Milk*, and to be taught again those *beginning-*
words of God, wherein in their first planting they had been *instructed*; which notwithstanding

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ing for the present he would *forbear* to press upon them, but go forward in his Design.

Not laying again the *Foundation* of *Repentance* and *Faith*, the Doctrine of *Baptismes*, Laying on of *Hands*, *Resurrection* and *Judgment*, which are all the Principles that are here *enumerated*; which some call five, some six, and some seven, though as to the number, if they must be taken for all the beginning *Principles*, I conceive we must either suppose them very *comprehensive*, or else many must be left out, as the *Ten Commandments*, and *several* of the *Institutions*, such as the Lord's Supper, which I presume will go for a beginning-teaching as well as Baptism.

Therefore we must suppose that *Repentance* and *Faith* must comprehend all, both the *Negative* and *Positive* part of *Holiness*; those of *Baptismes* and Laying on of *Hands*, the *Institutions*, *Priviledges* and *Order* in the Church of God; *Resurrection* and *Judgment*, the whole of our *Hope* and *Happiness* for the time to come; and particularly that *Doctrine* of laying on of hands, to contain not only those laying on of hands by which the miraculous Healings and *Spiritual Gifts* were attained for confirmation of the Gospel, but those laying on of hands for the investiture of the Church-*Officers*, who were to transact the whole order of God's House, for the *edification* of each Member, and therefore necessary to be taught to every one. And this is that, which amongst the *rest* they had need to be taught, and might have

have been teachers of themselves; viz. what was the end, use, blessing and benefit of such a Rite in the several *Ministrations* thereof; but no ground in the least to confirm it to one particular, much less to such an one of which no *Syllable* either here, or in the whole Book of God.

But why would you infer, that we by the Doctrine of Laying on of hands, may take in all the Laying on of hands spoken of? when as it is said laying on of hands in the Singular, and not layings on of hands in the Plural Number; therefore must respect only one sort of laying on of hands. *Obj. 6.*

Which is a meer Criticism, and has nothing of *Truth* in it; the Doctrine of laying on of hands is as much *Plural*, and may respect the teaching of all sorts, of laying on of hands, as the Doctrine of *Baptismes* respects all sorts of *Baptismes*. *Ans.*

But why should any be *offended* that we pray for a Blessing upon our *Brethren* or *Sisters* after their *Baptism*, or upon their admission into the Church, whereby the whole may also take the better notice for whom we pray? *Obj. 7.*

To which I answer, that we are not *offended* at a practice of that kind, be it *lifting up* or *laying on of hands*, provided it be not urged as a thing of *absolute necessity*; while the *Bishops* of *old* used many *Ceremonies*, people were not so much *concerned*; but when they would *impose* them as necessary, and *Institutions*. *Ans.*

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tutions of Christ, that broke the *Peace*, and occasioned much mischief; so to all such laying on of hands, a beginning-*Doctrine*, or Oracle of *God*, a Foundation of *Christian Religion*, to which every Member and Disciple of Christ ought to submit, upon penalty of Non-Communion for the neglecting or rejecting a *Foundation-Principle*, though no one word of *Institution*, *Command*, *Precept*, or *Example* for the same; and that under pretence of receiving more of that Spirit of Christ thereby, which is a Spirit of *Love*, *Meekness*, *Humility*, *Tenderness*, *Peace*, *Edification*, there appears to be more of that other Spirit of *uncharitable judging*, *rending*, *tearing*, and *dividing* the Body of Christ; and for asserting for *Doctrine* and *Practices* the *Customs*, *Commandments* and *Traditions* of men; it is for these things our *Offence* lies, as so well founded upon *Deut.* 4. 2. & 12. 32. *Rev.* 22. 18. *Prov.* 30. 6.

There are two Objections more that I have lately met with, that I think very necessary to give some Answer to; the one is this, *viz.*

Obj. 8. That as to the *Point of Antiquity*, though ('tis granted) the *Ancients* and their *Followers* ever since, have so much erred, not only in the *Subject*, but divers *Circumstances* about this *Rite* of Imposition of hands; yet inasmuch as there hath been *all along* such a *Witness* born to the *thing it self*, it makes much for its *Apostolicalness*, and confirms our *Practice* therein.

Ans.

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Answ. 1. To which, I say, That it doth not appear that such a *Witness* hath been born *all along* thereto; for as Mr. *Baxter* so ingenuously acknowledgeth, that *Justin Martyr*, *Irenaeus*, and others in those times are as silent about it, as the Scripture is that any of the *Apostles* did ever so practise it in the first times; those *Authorities* that are pretended to assert the same in the first *Centuries*, having been proved to be so *spurious* and *supposititious*.

Answ. 2. But Secondly, If the Practice of it should be granted to be as ancient as the keeping of *Easter* and *Lent*, *Diocesan Bishops*, and *Patriarchs*, and many other things that have been so generally received and practised, it no more proves it therefore to be *Apostolical* than each of them; For a pretence to *Ancient Prescription*, without a Word of God to warrant it, can never justify the *Divine Authority* of any Practice.

Obj. 9. The other is this, viz. That as to positive *Scripture-Institution*, so much called for to justify our practice of laying on of hands upon all the Baptized, from *Precept* or *Example*, it is not only *unreasonable*, but dangerous, as to many Truths, to be demanded (as hath in express words been lately told me) for where is the plain word either for *Women's* receiving the *Lord's Supper*, or to lay on hands upon *Officers*?

In answer whereto, I must needs say I am much grieved and astonished at such prevarication;

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cation; and than which, what can more betray the Truth and Justice of your Cause? for do not your own *Answers* to such like *Instances*, so usually brought by the *Pædobaptists*, sufficiently *confute* you? And do you not *know* that if we had not *plain and positive Scripture* for both, that we would not *practise* either? For is not 1 *Cor.* 11. 28. compared with 1 *Tim.* 2. 4, 5. & *Gal.* 3. 28. a sufficient *Precept* for *Womens Receiving*? And *Acts* 1. 14. with *Chap.* 2. 42, 44. substantial *evidence* for the *Practice* thereof? And as for laying on of hands upon Officers; is not 1 *Tim.* 5. 22. a *full Precept*? And *Acts* 6. 6. & 13. 3. & 14. 23. 1 *Tim.* 4. 14. as clear *Presidents* for the same? And may we not warrantably say, Let there be but as good *Scripture-Authority* produced for laying on of *Hands* upon all *Baptized Believers* before they are permitted to partake of the *Lords Supper*, and it shall suffice? But to set up a *Practice* in God's *Worship*, without a warranty from his *Word* by some plain *positive Rule and Direction* (the thing pleaded for by you) is no less (in my Judgment) than to give countenance to all the *Antichristian Innovations*, to let go at once the strongest Hold of *Protestantism*, reproach the *Wisdom* of Christ, and slight the *Authority* of the Holy Scriptures, as though we had not a sufficient *direction* therein in all parts of God's *Worship*.

And therefore to all those worthy *Sayings* to this purpose, of those *Eminent men* mentioned in the *Treatise of Bapt.* p. 93. I shall add that most remarkable *Expression* of *Dr. Owen*; which

which you'l find in his Communion with God, p. D. Owen.
171. viz. *This then they who hold Communion with Christ, are careful of, they will admit of nothing, practise nothing in the Worship of God, private or publick, but what they have his warrant for; for unless it comes in his Name, with Thus saith the Lord Jesus, they will not bear an Angel from Heaven; they know the Apostles themselves were to teach the Saints only what Christ commanded them, Mat. 28. 20.*

By which sound and wholefom Rule well observed, we are delivered from all Humane Inventions and Traditions; and by which Confirmation, Infants-Baptism, Lent, Easter, &c. and a hundred more of like import, are turned out of doors, as accusing Christ of unfaithfulness, and the Scripture of insufficiency.

And to which purpose, T. G. himself hath so very well urged lately to Dr. Stillingfleet, about Infant-Baptism, from Dr. Fulk out of Irenaus; viz. *When the Hereticks are reproved Irenaus. out of Scripture, they fall to accusing the Scriptures, as if all is not well in them, and that the Truth cannot be found out of them that know not Tradition: And therefore that Tertullian saith, Take away these things from the Hereticks, (which they hold with the Ethnicks) that they may stay their Questions upon the Scripture only.*

The Conclusion.

THUS you have had a *candid Account* of the *Rise, Growth and Progress* of this *Rite of Confirmation* or *Laying on of Hands*, from the beginning to this day (amongst all *Perfwasions* that have owned it) with the *Au- thorities* upon which it hath been *founded* and *imposed*; together with a genuine *Examination* of the *Grounds and Reasons* each Party have given to justify the same. And may we not upon the whole, fairly come to the following *Conclusions*? *viz.*

1. That there doth not appear to be the least *Scripture-Precept* or *Practise* for any such *Ordinance of Confirmation*, or an *Imposing of Hands* upon all the *Baptized* before they *break Bread*, or are admitted into *Church-Communion*.

2. That the *Instances* produced to prove it an *Apostolical Tradition*, are *impious Lies* and *Forgeries*.

3. That the *Au thorities* by which it hath been heretofore *enjoyed*, were nothing but *Antichristian Canons and Decrees*.

4. That the most *eminent Witnesses* and *Confessors* that opposed the *Antichristian Usurpations* and *Innovations*, have all along witnessed against and *impugned* this of *Confirmation*, *viz.* The *Novatians, Donatists, Waldenses, Greek Churches, Wickliffians, &c.*

All

All which are worthy the serious Consideration of all Sober and Judicious Christians, and are especially recommended to them, who having rejected Infants, and embraced Believers-Baptism, do yet cleave to this Practice, with these following Observations, viz.

1. That it is most manifest that those Popes, Councils and Fathers, that have enjoined and imposed Infants sprinkling for a Sacrament, or an Ordinance of Christ, have enjoined this also as such.

2. That the Principal Arguments that have been pretended for the one, have been urged and pleaded for the other also; viz. Apostolical Tradition, and pretended Inferences and Consequences from Scripture.

3. That the Famous Churches and Confessors that have opposed Infants-sprinkling, as Superstitions, Popish and Antichristian, have upon the same account, opposed this also.

4. That it doth not appear that any Baptized Church or People did ever, in any Age or Countrey, own such a Principle or Practice to this day, except some in this Nation in these late Times.

But then it may well be enquired, if this be so Novel a thing amongst the Baptists, how came those in this Countrey so to receive and practise it, as before asserted?

To which I give the following Account, as I have received it under the Hand of one, that affirms to have had the perfect knowledge thereof, as being an eye and ear-witness of the same, and who certifies to this purpose, viz.

“That

*How, when
and why,
laying on
of hands
was pra-
ctised by
the Bapt.
in this
Nation.*

" That about the year 1646, some 27 years
" since, one Mr. Cornwell, heretofore a pub-
" lick Preacher, then a Member and Mi-
" nister of a Baptized Congregation in
" Kent, was a great Asserter of this Principle
" and Practice; who coming about that time in-
" to that Baptized Congregation, then meeting in
" the Spittle Bishopsgate-Street, Lond. did from
" Heb. 5. 12, 13. & 6. 1, 2. preach the necessity of
" Laying on of Hands; inferring from thence,
" those that were not under laying on of hands,
" were not Babes in Christ, had not God, nor Com-
" munion with God. Whereupon, several of
" the said Congregation were perswaded to come
" under that Practice; and which notwithstanding,
" the Church in Tenderness indulged to them,
" upon their promise of a peaceable demeanour
" in the Church. Notwithstanding which their
" said Promise, they did afterwards not only
" press their said Perswasion uncharitably, as
" they had been taught by their aforesaid Teach-
" er; viz. That none were Babes in Christ, nor
" had Communion with God without it; there-
" fore not to be communicated with in Church-
" Ordinances (and as after was published in
" Print, by a Leading Brother amongst them, in
" a Book called God's Oracles, and Christ's
" Doctrine) but made a Rent and a Separation
" for the same; and from that very Schism propa-
" gated the same Principle and Practice amongst
" many others in the Nation ever since, who have
" kept that distance from their Brethren (not
" owning the same) as not esteeming or commu-
" nicating with them as the true Church of God,
" because defective in one of the beginning Prin-
" ciples

"*ciples or Foundations of the Christian Religion.*"

Now this being a true Narrative as to matter of Fact; doth it not naturally follow?

First, That such a Principle so suck'd in, and received, is founded in gross Ignorance and Error? For what can more savour of *Darkness and Error*, than to make our *Adoption and Communion with God* to depend upon some External Act done? As though Christ himself was utterly mistaken, when he tells us, *That as many as receive him, have the priviledge to become the Children of God, even as many as do believe in his Name, John 1. 12, 13.* And the Apostle also in confirmation thereof, *That we are all the Children of God by Faith in Christ, Jesus, Gal. 3. 26.* And, *that of his own Will we are begotten by the word of Truth, Jam. 1. 18.* But this Doctrine asserts our *New-Birth* in another way, by the Laying on of Hands after Baptism (and as though persons might be baptized that were not Children of God; but afterwards to be made so by this new way;) thereby confirming the *Superstition* of the *Papists*, in their Idolizing this Rite above all other Ordinances, as before.

And Secondly, The Principle (upon this account) appears not more erroneous, than the Practice upon it, corrupt and vicious; viz. to make a Separation from the Church upon it; so contrary not only to known Order, Discipline and Duty, but their declared Promise; and therefore must not all those Churches of that Constitution, necessarily be supposed to be founded in Sin and Schism, as well as in great

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great Error and Ignorance? and concerning which *unnatural* and *undue Separation*, I hear some of *Eminency* amongst them, have lately so had their *Conviction*, as to plead *Reformation* therein with their *Brethren*, and who I doubt not, from the true sense of the *bitter fruit* (even the *Gall* and *Wormwood* that hath been brought forth thereupon) will naturally be led to consider the *Root* from whence it hath sprung, *viz.* the mistaken Principle, as here discovered; for as our Saviour tells us, *Mat. 7. 17, 18.* That it is the *corrupt Tree* that brings forth the *evil fruit*; and that as the *good Tree* cannot bear *evil fruit*; so the *corrupt Tree* cannot bear *good fruit*. All which is recommended to the serious Consideration of the *Impartial* and *Judicious*; not doubting but the day is hastning, when not only all *Antichristian* *Popes* and *Darkness*, but all *Mists* of *Error* and *Ignorance*, shall be *dispelled*; and that the *God of Truth* will so send out his *Light* and *Truth*, and cause it so to spring up out of the *Earth*, that *Knowledge* shall fill the *Earth* as the *water* cover the *Sea*; when *Discord* and *Division* shall so cease amongst his *People*, that they shall not with their *Babylonish Language* vex one another any more, but with one *Lip* and *Shoulder* shall serve the Lord with one consent. And for the speedy accomplishing and fulfilling such *amiable* and *acceptable Promises*, let all the *Upright* say *Amen, Amen.*

F I N I S.